DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 186 103 PS 011 360

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TITLE Creative Development: Encouraging the Spirit of Wonder and Magic.
PUB DATE Apr 80
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Boston, MA, April 7-11, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Creative Activities; *Creative Expression; *Creative Thinking; Creativity Tests; Fantasy; *Imagination; *Preschool Children; *Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS Torrance (E Paul)

ABSTRACT

This paper broadly summarizes research conclusions on the following aspects of creativity: characteristics of the creative behavior of preschool children; specific thinking abilities that account for differences in the degree of creativity from one person to another (fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration); general conditions under which creativity seems to flourish in the schools; and ideas for facilitating the child's creative thinking through teacher behavior and planning for classroom activities. (SS)

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CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT:

ENCOURAGING THE SPIRIT OF WONDER AND MAGIC

George W. Maxim

Beginning his favorite activity, Joel enthusiastically turned to the easel and started to paint a warm, rich winter scene. His smiles and expressions of strong involvement indicated deep thought and careful planning - almost as if he were saying to himself, "This is a special picture because it is all mine." Once completed, Joel stepped back to admire his work of art. With pleasure sweeping his face, Joel showed his picture to his best friend, Arthur. Both boys giggled and chatted as they surveyed the scene. All was going well until a strong voice intervened. "Whoever heard of a green sun? Do your picture over again and paint the sun yellow. I won't let you take home such a silly picture."

During another part of the day, Terri and Shana secluded themselves in a distant corner of the playground, participating in an activity that both seemed to greatly enjoy - expressing their thoughts to each other in spontaneous, colorful language. "Look at that blue bird," said Terri, "wouldn't it be funny to see a green checked bird?" Shana laughed, "A green checked bird? It would have to come from a green checked egg!" Joyfully, the two girls continued to talk in similar expressions - their attention focused upon their surroundings, but their thoughts running

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away into highly fanciful directions. Their kindergarten teacher, sensing the value of such imaginative thought as a means of developing creative self-expression, listened to the children and encouraged their further verbal explorations. However, once it became time to move indoors, Mr. Carling surprisingly announced, "The fun is over now, girls. It's time to go in and do our reading."

Many children enjoy fanciful experiences such as those described above. They love to participate in activities where their minds are allowed to wander - seeking to find new relationships between the known and the unknown, experimenting with knowledge in new ways, or producing something in their own unique, original manner. Adults, however, often become confused about such common childhood endeavors and frown upon such originality with descriptions such as "Stop that <u>silliness</u>," or "Do it the <u>right way</u>." Such rigidity has a powerful influence on the child's confidence as well as on his willingness to try something new. Joel, for example, may hesitate to join the others in a group finger-painting activity directed by the teacher after the crushing experience described earlier. "What if I don't make a picture like my teacher wants?" may begin to characterize his thinking whenever new projects or activities are initiated.

Whenever children express their thoughts or actions in inventive, self-initiated, original ways, we say that they are <u>creative</u> children. Creative thinkers are those who produce truly

unique reactions to something in their environment. The reactions may be similar to those discovered by millions of children before them, but the characteristic that makes any reaction creative is that it was new to them. This may show up in infants as they discover newer ways to play with their toys or in adults as they seek to find an easier way to perform a household chore. Each person has some unique way ofmeeting a situation, but it seems as though some people feel freer to search for and express their unique ideas than do others. E. Paul Torrance feels that a great deal of what contributes to a person's ultimate ability to exhibit open-ended, original thinking as opposed to rigid, closed-ended thinking occurs in the school. He said:

> ... creative imagination during early childhood seems to reach a peak between four- and four-and-a-half years, and is followed by a drop at about age five when the child enters school for the first time. This drop has generally been regarded as the inevitable phenomenon in nature. There are now indications, however, that this drop in five-year-olds is a man-made rather than a natural phenomenon.[1]

Some people argue that this phenomeron occurs because it is at the kindergarten year when schools begin to clamp down and limits the freedom of children. "You're acting like a two-year-old," or "What do you think you are - a clown?" and similar

sarcastic put-downs often accompany adventuresome, unique attempts at self-expression. Most children eventually conform to the growing rigidity of the school structure, but a few are reluctant to change - they clearly keep a "bit of that child" within them as they continue to meet life's challenges in such independent, adventurous ways.

The noted Russian psychologist, Kornei Chukovsky, believes that creative thought is extremely important since, "Without imaginative fantasy there would be complete stagnation in both physics and chemistry, because the formulation of new hypotheses, the invention of new implements, the discovery of new methods of experimental research, the conjecturing of new chemical fusions - all these are products of imagination and fantasy."[2] Sidney Parnes added these thoughts: "We must cultivate talent in the way soil nurtures a seed. It provides for the growth of the seed but it does not tell the seed what to become."[3] Arnold Toynbee warns Americans that a lack of emphasis on creativity in our schools could cause dire results" " ... if America is to treasure and foster all the creative ability that she has in her, a new and bright spirit of change has to be injected into her educational philosophy. The rather rigid egalitarian models of educational selection and treatment, which seem to me to be tenaciously held by the ... majority of American people, will, I should press, have to be refashioned to include the creative talents of the coming generation .... new educational philosophies and new institutions of learning need to be constructed to provide an opportunity for

creative individuals to enhance their talents in schools."[4]

Some highly creative people, including Einstein and Edison, were considered dunces by their teachers because they would not (or could not) conform to the inflexible patterns of thought expected by their teachers. Goertzel and Goertzel[5], in their study of over 400 eminent people, most of whom would be regarded as highly creative, estimated that 60% had serious school problems. Those are only but a few who had the persistence to "stick it out." But what has happened to the thousands of youngsters who surrendered their creative urges to conformity and, therefore, were never encouraged nor allowed to make their significant creative contributions to society? Teachers and parents should be highly concerned about such questions as well as about providing encouragement and activity designed to help salvage our neglected and wasted human resources. Before suggestions for such provisions can be made, however, it would be wise at this point to explore more deeply the characteristics of creative behavior of preschool children.

CREATIVE BEHAVIOR OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

Perhaps the most significant studies of creativity in preschool children were those conducted by E. Paul Torrance[6] of the University of Georgia. His developmental and experimental studies were concerned with the characteristics of creative behavior in four- and five-year olds. You should be aware of these characteristics so that you are able to arrange your environment in ways

that encourage such patterns in all children. A sketch of his tentative conclusions and exemplary excerpts is given below.

1. Creative preschool children learn in creative ways.

These children enjoy experimenting, manipulating, and playing. They ask questions, make guesses, and offer their findings - sometimes quickly and emotionally while at other times tentatively and quietly.

> Wilfredo normally enjoyed participating in the various learning activities as they were arranged about the room, and today was no exception. Moving to the science area, he quickly became engrossed in the manipulation of sound jars - glass containers filled to different levels of water. Each container, when struck with a small mallet, produced a different pitch. Wilfredo experimented with the various jars for some time until he discovered a pattern. Running to the teacher and asking her to come, he proudly announced, "Listen, here's the song we were singing before - I learned a song, I learned a song!" and plunked away at the first few notes of "Jingle Bells." "Oh, that's wonderful, Wilfredo," offered the teacher, "How did you learn?" "It was easy," he replied, "I just figured it out."

In similar ways, young children will always try to make sense out of their environment by seeking out things that are wrong or missing or by finding out answers to things they don't understand. They are uncomfortable until they do something about inconsistencies

in their lives. Therefore, you will find these children saying, "I'll have to figure this out," when faced with situations such as:

finishing a puzzle

moving a heavy object

building with blocks

watching snow melt.

2. Creative preschool children have amazingly long attention spans when involved in creative endeavors.

Although many "experts" have established fifteen minutes as the maximum span of attention extended by the preschooler for one activity, Torrance found that creative youngsters were able to concentrate on creative tasks for as long as thirty minutes and, in some cases, for as long as sixty minutes at one time. For that reason, he recommends that children be allowed to continue with exciting activities even though the curriculum calls for something else. This point is illustrated in the following incident related by one of Torrance's students:

> A three-year-old on a walk with the class was shown a snail. Completely fascinated, he spent the remaining school time (one and one-half hours) observing and touching the snail, rather to my annoyance, but I let him alone while the rest of us went on with crafts. The child consequently became so interested in nature's small creatures that at age five he is quite an authority on

on small creatures. He approaches them stealthily and while looking for lizards practically looked a rattlesnake in the eyes. He immediately recognized it and retreated just as quietly and was unharmed.[7]

Reading this excerpt brought to mind the comments of one teacher who remarked about a creatively talented youngster in her room: "If that boy should live to be a man, and an opportunity given for the exercise of his talents, few names will be greater than his."

3. Creative children have surprising capacity for organization.

Although these children can tolerate disorder for short periods of time, they demonstrate a need for orderliness and have strong capacities for organizing their environment. They want things to be organized and have real interests and talents for doing so by themselves.

The block building corner was the center of activity this morning for Gina and Yi-Ming, two exceptionally talented four-year-olds. They cooperatively created a block building that was to represent an indoor swimming pool - planning and coordinating their efforts all along the way. The combination of blocks was decided upon after great periods of discussion and deliberation. Once completed, both children stood back and joyfully examined their magestic creation. "Isn't it nice?" asked Yi-Ming. "Yep -

and we did it by ourselves," answered Gina, "It looks just like the pool at the YMCA." "Oh ..." thought Yi-Ming out loud, "but where will the people go in? We forgot the door!" Gina examined the structure for a minute and then offered a suggestion. "We can't put it there," complained Yi-Ming, "the water will leak out. Let's think this out." Bot children studied the structure, offered alternative solutions, and finally came upon a plan that met their satisfaction. "It sure paysto think," offered Gina as they finally approved their structure.

Gina and Yi-Ming demonstrated a strong ability to organize their efforts in the teamed construction of a large building as well as in the formulation of a solution to their problem situation. They recognized that they needed to act in an organized manner if they were going to accomplish their task and took almost as much pride in their ability to organize their problem solving efforts as in their final creation.

4. Creative children are able to return to familiar things and see them in a different way and in greater depth.

These children do not get bored when exposed to the same experience more than once. Surprisingly, they seem satisfied after the first experience, but are prepared to examine it more thoroughly the second time around.

Rose was most interested when her group visited the farm one day. They went into the barn and watched as a number of hens were sitting on their eggs. The teacher explained that the hen's warm

body kept the eggs warm until they hatched, but that the chicks were not yet ready to be hatched. As the group moved on, the parent volunteer talked with Rose and answered many of the young girl's questions.

Upon returning home, Rose enthusiastically shared her new interests with her parents. Realizing her strong desire to observe the hatching of young chicks, Rose's parents arranged for a visit to the farm of a friend near the time when his eggs were to hatch. Rose, of course, was fascinated by the experience and stayed at the farm all day while watching the young chicks frolic.

Some adults would hesitate to closely duplicate an experience for young children for fear of boredom or inattentiveness. Contrary to such beliefs, creative youngsters use a second experience to more slowly and methodically examine their recollections of the first. They can savor the first experience, extend it, and think more deeply about it.

5. Creative pre-primary children learn a great deal through fantasy and solve many of their problems of development through its use.

Fantasy is one of the young child's favorite ways of thinking and should be developed and guided in the preschool setting. Unfortunately, adults often eliminate expressions of fantasy in school (especially in the primary grades) because they view it as being psychologically unhealthy. However, imaginative role-

playing, story-telling, art work, or language play are quite normal childhood activities and are a part of creative learning.

Mrs. Hernandez enjoyed watching her children paint and appreciated all of their creative expressions. The children felt comfortable with their teacher because they knew she would never say, "That's not right," or "Do it this way." Ronnie, for example, is a careful, methodical painter who likes to make neat paintings. He carefully dips his brush into green paint and draws a long line. He then adds a few dots on each side of the green line and draws a circle. He then dips his brush into the red paint and dabs a small amount inside the circle. "All done," Ronnie proclaims as he carefully puts his painting aside to dry.

Tara, on the other hand, expresses her creativity in a bolder, less-controlled fashion. Starting her picture, Tara puts her brush into the red paint and smears it in the center of her paper, making large, bold strokes. She then adds blue and yellow, slopping on each color so that a considerable amount of overflowing and overlapping is present. She intently and actively paints her picture until the entire paper was covered with one color or another. She was content throughout the activity to explore all of the possibilities of the medium, but in a different way than Ronnie.

Mrs. Hernandez obviously realized that both children were experiencing cognitive insights and emotional release during the

process of their art work and allowed each to work in an individual way. She knew that the creative process in which they were involved was much more important than the resulting product, so she allowed the children to adopt a style that was most comfortable for them rather than impose her own pattern on them. Likewise, we must encourage self-expression through art, music, creative dramatics, or language usage in a manner that allows children to express their fanciful, personal thoughts in an atmosphere of freedom and acceptance.

6. Creative young children enjoy "playing" with words and seem to be natural story tellers.

Children's art seems to be appreciated by many people throughout the country, especially as we see it displayed on advertisements, book or magazine illustrations, or even postage stamps. Their verbal compositions, however, are seldom as widely appreciated or attractively treated in publications and displays. Many imaginative stories are created daily by young children and deserve much more recognition than they now receive.

Several children in this four-year-old classroom were becoming interested in experimenting with word sounds and story construction. As Cindy and Dee played at the outdoor water table, for example, they verbalized, "Drip, drip, drip. Splishy splashy, splishy splashy...." "Look, I'm making it rain. "Rain, rain, you're a pain." "Rain splashing...the clouds are bumping together...wet trees, wet sidewalks, a flood!" Get out the raincoats and 'brellas."

Their teacher, Mr. Jackson, enjoyed listening to such creative patter and often offered thought provoking comments designed to encourage further verbal exploration. "That's a very nice story," he offered, "I like it very much. What if it rained all over the world right now?"

"I like rain," said Cindy, "it's fun to run through the puddles. My dog runs with me - splish, splash, splish, splash."

"I'm afraid of the thunder," answered Dee, "Kaboom... kaboom...." Playfully, the two girls joined in shrieking laughter and ran to the porch roof for "cover."

There are many opportunities during the day to encourage such creative verbal self-expression. Perhaps the most important role of the teacher in such instances is to appreciate the children's expressions and listen to what they say. When they find that you value their creative endeavors, the children will enjoy expressing their thoughts and will eventually feel more comfortable to use other avenues of creative expression, too.

One pitfall of encouraging creative verbalization should be emphasized at this point. Make a concerted effort to resist the temptation of requesting that the children tell you a story. Not all children can freely do so and to ask them to express their thoughts upon your request will be putting them into a position (sometimes frustrating) of trying to "please the teacher." Wait for them to feel the desire to express their thoughts - an open avenue for verbal expression can serve as a valuable pathway for finding creative delight, sharing thoughts with others, or for expressing emotions and fears.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVE THOUGHT

All individuals are born with some degree of creative potential and are subject to Piaget's suggestion that the basic goal of education should be to produce individuals who are capable of creativity (bringing new or original thinking to the solution of problems), invention, and discovery. Some people may look at such a statement and respond, "Don't look at me - I'm as uncreative as anyone can be!" Such people view creativity in an unrealistic light - they think of creativity as a magical ability that allows someone to design a new invention, compose a best-sell song, or paint a masterful picture. The teacher of young children must see youngsters in a wider, fuller sense - a view in which creativity means any way of reacting to a situation that goes beyond the mere imitation of what someone else did in that situation. Earl C. Kelley explained:

> Every person needs the chance to be creative. This does not mean that everyone should paint a picture or write a symphony. Creativity occurs whenever a person contrives a new way out of a unique dilemma. It is simply meeting the problems of living and inventing new ways to solve them. Most of us do this every day in a greater or lesser degree.[9]

Young children, because of their limited experiences, meet new problems daily. Whenever they develop original solutions to such problems, some degree of creative thinking has been involved. Some children may display a higher degree of creativity than others,

but no children are without some creativity. In infants, creativity may show up when the child invents a new way to play with a plastic ring while in toddlers it may be reflected in a new combination of words. Whatever the outward manifestation of the creative process, the essential feature of the process is the ability to generate different ideas in the production of things or ideas. Of course, some children will possess more potential for creativity than others. We must not look unfavorably upon those who do not - the less creative are valuable too. Our main message here is to provide situations so that all children will be encouraged to bring out and nourish the creative potential with which they are endowed.

Even though creativity exists in all people, studies have shown that certain specific thinking abilities account for the differences in the degree of creativity from one person to another: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. These four characteristics suggest a general description of creative thinking, but no one really knows for sure. Because no one is yet sure about what creativity is, we are forced to say that creativity is a highly complex mental process. E. Riley Holman[10] has prepared one of the most meaningful explanations of the four specific thinking abilities associated with creativity:

Fluent thinking involves the production of a quantity of ideas in response to a specific problem. The focus is on the free flow of thought and on generating an unlimited number of relevant responses to that problem. For example, the young child who responds to the question, "What things are red?" with "apple, book, a car, a beet, a crayon, Santa's suit and shoes" is a more fluent thinker

than the child who gives only "fire engine and an apple." Fluency is encouraged by giving students many opportunities to participate in open-ended learning experiences where their free-wheeling thoughts are valued.

Flexible thinking relates to the production of different kinds of ideas suggested in relationship to a specific problem. The focus is on variety and diversity of examples, not merely a great number of ideas, as with fluency. The flexible thinker is one who is able to shift his thinking so that different types of ideas are produced. For example, the child who indicates that a pencil may be used for several diverse purposes such as to write, hold up a window, tap on a drum, and lead a song is more flexible than the one who suggests that it may be used to draw, write numbers, write words and write secret messages. Teachers can encourage flexible thinking by stimulating children to think about situations where many answers are possible and by appreciating their responses to those situations.

Original thinking is associated with the production of thoughts or products that can be judged as clever or remote. It is characterized as the production of ideas that are so far away from the obvious that they are considered unusual. For example, the child who, in response to the teacher, finishes the short sentence, "He opened the bag and found . . ." with "a giant spotted firefly." is more original than the child who suggests "an orange." Originality can be developed by encouraging students to bring something "new" into their normal classroom routines and by composing songs, poems,

stories or skits reflecting particular themes.

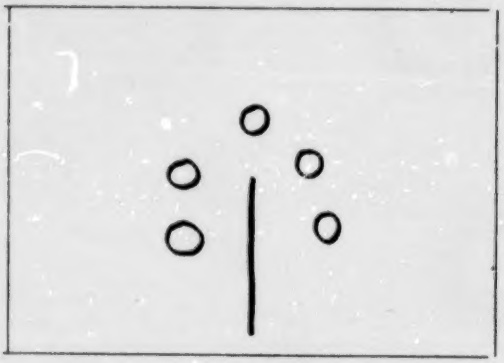
Elaborative thinking involves adding the necessary ingredients to a new response in order to actually develop it or work it out in reality. It may also involve embroidering upon a simple idea or response to make it more detailed or to outline the steps necessary to put an idea into operation. For example, the student who responds to the teacher's invitation to add more information to the sentence, "The cat sat on the porch," with "The lazy, black and white alley cat sat on the top step of the rotten, old porch" demonstrates greater elaborative ability than the one who says, "The black cat sat on the old porch." Elaboration can be encouraged by asking children to add detail to a simple idea to make it more interesting or by stimulating great amounts of verbalization.

Children exhibiting these creative abilities are apparent in the preschool setting - we can see a steady progression in their ingenuity, imagination, and mastery of ways to use things available to them. They first understand the ways in which materials can be used normally and then move to the exploration of ways in which they can shape new products or new uses for products. The child does this with many things in his environment: plastic cups are not merely to be used for drinking liquids, they make wonderful scoops for the sand area, they can hold a pet hermit crab while its cage is being prepared, they can be used in pairs to simulate binoculars, or they can even be decorated with glue, sand, sea shells, spangles, and pebbles and sent home as colorful pencil

holders. Paper clips, napkins, rubber bands, paper bags, straws, water, clay, paints, blocks, saws, hammers, leaves, twigs, rhythm instruments, and infinitum all furnish the fuel for the child's creative engine. The teacher is the key that turns on that engine and encourages it to continue running.

Test designed to measure children's creativity tend to measure the four basic thinking abilities described earlier. Guilford's Unusual Uses Test[11] requires the children to propose unconventional uses for common objects. For example, the child is asked to tell all the ways he can think of to use a brick, a light bulb, or a piece of paper. E. Paul Torrance measures creativity by asking the children to show how many ways they can get from where they are to the other side of the room, to invent as many uses for a cup, or to express their original thoughts through other forms of action and movement. Wallach and Kogan[12] use a variety of techniques, among which is asking children to describe various kinds of pattern drawings. Figure 1 illustrates two of the patterns employed by Wallach and Kogan as well as some of the conventional and creative replies. These and similar tests may be useful to teachers who are interested in measuring the creative potential of their youngsters. Figure 2 illustrates a guidesheet suitable for direct teacher observation of creative behaviors in young children.

Teachers can and should encourage creativity in young children. Although all children will not become Mozarts, Michelangelos, Einsteins, or Curies because of their creative experiences, most educators believe that creative thinking is a valuable cognitive



Conventional Response: "Flower."

Creative Response: "Lollipop bursting into pieces."

Conventional Response: "Two igloos."

Creative Response: "Two haystacks on a flying carpet."

Figure 1. Stimulus materials to assess children's creativity. Source: Michael A. Wallach and Nathan Kogan, Modes of Thinking in Young Children (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 34.

tool. Researchers have attempted to identify the conditions under which creativity seems to flourish in the schools and have come up with these general conditions:

(1) remove time limits from activities in which children are deeply involved.

(2) establish a free, open atmosphere where open expression is encouraged.

(3) allow the children to share ideas and stimulate each other's thinking.

(4) remove conditions where stress and anxiety are present.

In order to establish such conditions, it seems that teachers have two important roles - (1) to act as a facilitator for the

OBSERVING FOR CREATIVE BEHAVIOR

	1	2	3
Offers answers different from those expected			
Offers many responses to questions or problems			
Interprets questions in different ways			
Sees many different sides of problems			
Tends not to "go along with the crowd"			
Shows willingness to take risks			
Handles failures well; is not threatened by being wrong			
Often asks why			
Supports own ideas strongly			
Uninhibited in actions			
Seeks more knowledge			
Challenges authority			
Resists rules calling for conformity			
Seems to enjoy finding different ways to get into "trouble"			
Concentrates on problems and persists in finding answers			
Finds unusual ways of doing routine things			
Receptive to change			
Breaks problems down into component parts			
Does things to please self, not others			
Exhibits sense of humor			
Likes to tell and hear creative stories			
Demonstrates interests and abilities in the areas not directly related to school			

1 = Nearly always
2 = About ½ time
3 = Seldom

Figure 2. Teacher recording form for observing creative behaviors in your children.

the child's thinking and (2) to arrange for classroom activities that encourage creative expression and free thinking.

Facilitating the Child's Thinking

The teacher must develop skills of listening to the children and encouraging their deeper explorations into creative thinking. This can be accomplished by asking questions that encourage children to go beyond the obvious, that help them see relationships among ideas, and to improve or combine ideas. The following list offers a sample of idea-spurring questions that indicate interest in the children's thinking and serve to encourage deeper thought:

"What else can your boad do?"

"What might happen if people knew how to fly?"

"What if all the trees had red leaves?"

"If you were a bird, how would you tell me you are hungry?

"Why do you suppose the ice melted?"

"In how many different ways could you use the light bulb to get my attention?"

"Have you ever thought of a new way that this ball could be used?"

"Why is your painting like you?"

"Does the stop sign take the place of anyone?"

"What would you add to (or take away from) the story?"

"What would happen if we slept during the day and were awake at night?"

"What, instead of the shovel, could you use to dig in the garden?"

"How would you feel if you saw a fly as big as a cow?"

"If you had a chance to be any animal you wanted to be, which one would you choose?"

Notice that all questions deliberately went beyond the obvious and went toward encouraging original ideas, many ideas (rather than only one), combinations of ideas, improvement of ideas, and free association among ideas. The ability to seize upon opportunities and ask questions such as the above is a sophisticated one that comes after a great deal of thought and practice. Be aware of the opportunities when they arise, for your children must be helped to experience the satisfactions associated with expressing oneself freely as a person, with confidence and approval.

Arranging Classroom Activities

Although each area of the preschool curriculum is ripe for creative endeavors, the areas of art, music, creative dramatics, and play are often more closely associated with creativity than are some of the others. Preschool teachers understand the value of these areas and make sure that children have many opportunities for free expression through art, music, language, and play. Examine the extent to which your program encourages creative expression in these areas by asking yourself the following questions:

- Dramatic play. Do your children ever engage in make believe play in which they pretend or simulate situations and people? Which best describes the variety in your children's dramatic play? (a) have one favorite theme which they use almost all of the time, (b) have two or three favorite themes which they like to vary but generally stick with, or (c) have a wide range of themes and enjoy variety.

- Constructive play. Do your children ever engage in play in which they make things, build things, or draw? When they are free to build or make things, what do they make? Which statement best applies to the products of your children's constructive play? (a) attempt to make products as representative of reality as possible, (b) products have some representation to reality but have some unique aspects as well, or (c) draw or make things as they remember them or as they would like for them to be with little attention to perspective, proportion, or relationships.

- Humor. Which statement best describes your children's ability to perceive humor? (a) make little or no attempt to do or say funny things, (b) attempt to do or say some funny things primarily to imitate what they have seen others do, or (c) can take information and use it to produce creative humor which is new for them.

The areas of art, language, and play, of course, provide the most apparent opportunities for encouraging creative thinking. However, unique thinking abilities can be brought out in other areas as well. For example, simply asking open-ended questions might work; questions such as, "Who can think of a way to make this broken wagon work again?" or "Who can think up a game we've never played before?" or "Who can think of new movements to the song Punchinello?" Also, expose your children to a variety of new and stimulating experiences. Take youngsters

to museums, airports, and the library. Play new games, do experiments, engage in song and art activities. Cynthia S. Sunal offered these suggestions:

Start with:

What things can you see in the room?

Think of all the words you can that start with the letter R--red, run, rough...

Think of all the things that are blue.

How many people's names can you think of?

1. Turn off the sound. . .

   Run a film without sound to introduce a unit or activity -- children should more carefully observe the action.

   Later, show it with sound and talk about it again.

2. Record field trips on sound or video tape. Use tapes with later discussion of field trip.

3. Have an "idea box." Children could contribute odds and ends to it. Materials can be used in activities to help express ideas through pictures that can be felt by fingers as well as seen.

4. Collections -- Let them collect anything and everything. Organize speciments later in scrapbooks or shoeboxes.

5. Children can teach . . .

   Capitalize on a child's interest in Marie Curie, dinosaurs or holes. Encourage the child to teach others about this interest.

6. Field trips -- a necessity whether it's to the schoolyard or one hour away.

7. Display it -- children's collections, work, activities, pictures are stimulating to other children.

8. Play "What I need is..."

   Perhaps two children need the same thing -- why do they need it? What will they do with it? Does someone have it and wish they didn't? etc.

9. What happens if I do this to it? Introduce an object. Let the children bend, squeeze, crush, drop, hit and rub it.

10. Take a walk at night together -- no flashlights! Listen to the sounds. Look at the tree (house) silhouettes, collect fireflies, look at how much light there really is.

11. Take a stream hike -- wade in it. Stumble on the banks. How fast is it going? What's on the bottom? Where could you build a house by it? Are there mosquitoes? Do you like to fish? Do you see any fish in it?

12. Take a shopping center trip .... Who sweeps this place? What kinds of stores are in here? Do you shop here? Do lots of people drive their cars here?

Remember that preschool children are at the peak of creativity - they enter the preschool setting with curiosity and eagerness. Encourage their creative thought through all areas of the preschool curriculum, but especially in the areas of art, music, and play. Your own attitudes about the value of creative thinking will set the tone for creative endeavors in the classroom and determine whether or not the children can creatively reenact all that they hear, see, touch, smell, and taste. If we provide them with the avenues to interpret and express such sensations in imaginative ways, we allow the children to grow and develop into beings whose creativity will be allowed to blossom fully

in later life.

If you are interested in more information on preschool gifted and talented children, you may wish to contact the state consultant for the gifted in your state department of education or write:

Information Services for the Gifted and Talented
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

FOOTNOTES

[1]E. Paul Torrance, "Adventuring in Creativity," Childhood Education, 40:2 (1963), p. 79.

[2]Kornei Chukovsky, From Two to Five (Berkely, California: University of California Press, 1963), p. 116.

[3]Sidney Parnes in (no author) Igniting Creative Potential (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bella Vist Elementary School, 1971), p. 110.

[4]Arnold Toynbee in Calvin W. Taylor, "Introduction," Igniting Creative Potential (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bella Vista Elementary School, 1971), p. 13.

[5]V. Goertzel and Mildred G. Goertzel, Cradles of Eminence (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962).

[6]E. Paul Torrance, Creativity (Belmont, California: Fearon Publishers, 1969), pp. 4-12.

[7]Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[8]Jean Piaget, "Development and Learning," in R.E. Ripple and V.N. Rockcastle, eds., Piaget Rediscovered (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1964), pp. 7-20.

[9]Earl C. Kelley, In Defense of Youth (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 140.

[10]The explanations are taken from a yet untitled, unpublished manuscript by E. Riley Holman of West Chester State College, West Chester, Pennsylvania.

[11]J.P. Guilford, The Nature of Human Intelligence (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967).

[12]M.A. Wallach and N. Kogan, Modes of Thinking in Young Children (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965).